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Birds of a Washington City Dooryard.

BY HARRY C. OBERHOLSER.

Attention has on a number of occasions been called to the fact that even in the midst of a large city numerous opportunities for out-of-door bird study exist. Many more birds than one might think venture into the closely built-up portions of the city, particularly wherever any trees or shrubbery are to be found. The writer has for a long time been interested in this phase of ornithology, especially to see what species come into our city of Washington, D. C., and at what seasons of the year.

From May 5 1911, to May 1, 1918, we lived at No. 1444 Fairmont Street, N. W., and there, with a number of interruptions, but, as opportunity permitted, more or less continuously, especially during the past four years, made observations on birds. These notes were taken of necessity incidentally, chiefly in the mornings before 8 o'clock and in the evenings after 6, except on Sundays and holidays, when, of course, more hours were available.

The house in which we lived stands between 14th Street and University Place, in a solid row; and the entire street on both sides east to the next corner at 14th Street is entirely occupied by dwellings. In front of the house there were two rows of small trees, one along each side of the street. At the western end of the block are two or three large silver poplar trees, inside a yard. The back yard of our house, together with those of several adjoining dwellings on the same street, and the large double yard of the house just back of ours, which faces on Euclid Street (the first street south), form a considerable open space divided only by low fences. In this area there is considerable shrubbery, a few small trees, and several large silver poplars, one of the latter being in our own yard. This place is, consequently, a decided attraction

for birds, as the number of species which frequent it indicates.

The total number of different kinds of birds observed during the seven years amounts to 100, including those observed flying over but not actually alighting. On some occasions during spring and autumn many birds were identified from their notes as they passed low over the city on their migration at night. Our list, while not so large as some lists from other cities, includes, nevertheless, not a few rare or unexpected birds, though it is almost as remarkable for species that it does not contain. There is, of course, more or less of chance in desultory observations of this character, and the missing birds may well have occurred during the period of observation, but accidentally escaped being seen. Some species have, apparently, their regular times for coming into the city, not necessarily coextensive with their period of occurrence in this general region, and this applies even to transients. Naturally spring and autumn are in general the best seasons, but it seems that the latter is even better in some respects than spring, for we have observed more species during a single day here in fall than ever in spring. The very best time, at least for a variety of birds, is the last week in September, especially if the weather is fine. As an indication of what may be seen at this time, the two following lists from observations made about an hour before 8 a. m. and during the evening after 6 o'clock may be found of interest:

September 26, 1916.—American Sparrow Hawk, Northern Flicker, Brown Thrasher, Bluebird, Southern Robin, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Olive-backed Thrush, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Blue Jay, Fish Crow, Cedar Waxwing, American Redstart, Cape May Warbler, Black and White Warbler, Purple Grackle, Cardinal, English Sparrow, Purple Finch. Total, 18 species.

September 21, 1917.—Sora Rail, Northern Flicker, Chimney Swift, Bluebird, Southern Robin, Hermit Thrush, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Olive-backed Thrush, Blue Jay, Cedar Waxwing, American Redstart, Black-poll Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Bobolink, Purple Grackle, Cardinal, English Sparrow, American Goldfinch. Total, 18 species.

A complete catalogue of all the species observed during our period of observation, with brief notes on their occurrence, will be found in the succeeding pages. We are indebted to Miss May T. Cooke of 1450 Fairmont St. N. W., for several records additional to our own.

1. *Nycticorax nycticorax naevius*. Black-crowned Night Heron.
This species was observed on three occasions flying over—May 18, 1914; September 1, 1917; and January 17, 1918.

2. *Butorides virescens virescens*. Green Heron.
Noted on four occasions—May 13, 1912; May 18, 1917; August 21, 1916; and August 24, 1914.

3. *Cathartes aura septentrionalis*. Turkey Vulture.
Although the Turkey Buzzard is of common occurrence about Washington, we have actually seen it at this place in the city only three times—February 28, 1915; September 24, 1916; and September 23, 1917; on each occasion sailing over high in the air.

4. *Tinnunculus columbarius columbarius*. Pigeon Hawk.
One seen flying over on February 20, 1916.
5. *Cerchneis sparveria sparveria*. American Sparrow Hawk.
This bird breeds in the cornices of buildings in our section of the city, and we have frequently seen it at our place, either flying over or perching on the very top of the large silver poplar tree in the yard. It has been noticed most often in April, May, September, and October, the earliest date being April 11, 1915, and the latest, November 9, 1915.

6. *Colinus virginianus virginianus*. Bob-white.
This was one of our most interesting and most unexpected visitors. Once a single bird, on a date not recorded, came into the back yard and perched on one of the fences for a considerable time. On September 21, 1913, two birds were heard calling from the trees in the street in front of the house; and on May 6, 1914, one was heard in the area back of the house. There seems to be little attraction for a Bob-white in the city, a place so very different from its native heath.

7. *Porzana carolina*. Sora Rail.
One individual heard calling in flight over the house on the night of September 21, 1917.

8. *Tringa solitaria solitaria*. Solitary Sandpiper.
Noted on two occasions flying over—May 13, 1912, and May 21, 1917. It is of interest to mention that the latter date equals the latest previous spring record for the species in the vicinity of Washington.

9. *Bartramia longicauda*. Upland Plover.
The Upland Plover is now one of the rare birds about Wash-

ington. Its mellow, characteristic note was several times heard on the night of August 21, 1916, coming from two birds flying over our place, evidently on their migration

10. *Actitis macularia*. Spotted Sandpiper.

Heard on three occasions, flying over at night—April 28, 1915; and May 13 and 14, 1914.

11. *Oxyechus vociferus vociferus*. Killdeer.

Heard flying over at night on three dates—May 15, 1918; May 13, 1912; and September 10, 1915.

12. *Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*. Mourning Dove.

Seen on only one occasion—July 4, 1915.

13. *Coccyzus americanus americanus*. Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

Observed only in June, July and August, and not since 1915. The earliest date is June 23, 1914, the latest, August 23, 1914.

14. *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*. Black-billed Cuckoo.

Noted only once—on September 19, 1915.

15. *Colaptes auratus luteus*. Northern Flicker.

One of the commonest birds from March to September, and up to October 3 (1916). We observed it also on January 17 and 23, 1916. In the spring of 1915 and of 1916 a pair had a nest in the dead portion of the trunk of one of the high silver poplar trees in the large yard back of ours. We could watch the birds from the windows of the house and found their behavior of great interest. The birds could be heard calling at almost any time of the day during the early spring.

16. *Melanerpes erythrocephalus*. Red-headed Woodpecker.

Of nothing like as common occurrence as the Flicker, and very irregular. Seen from May 25 to 30, 1916; on June 2, 1916; June 29, 1914; August 18, 1914; September 8, 1915; and September 24, 1916.

17. *Dryobates pubescens medianus*. Downy Woodpecker.

A more or less frequent visitor during August, September, and October, but strange to say, not observed in any other month of the year. Its earliest date is August 14, 1915, and its latest, October 14, 1917.

18. *Dryobates villosus villosus*. Hairy Woodpecker.

Once observed, but the date was not recorded.

19. *Sphyrapicus varius varius*. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

One seen by Miss May T. Cooke, among the trees in the yard at the west end of our block, but we have no other record.

20. *Otus asio naevius*. Screech Owl.

Heard calling on the evenings of September 25, 1917, and October 4, 1914.

21. *Chordeiles minor minor*. Night Hawk.

Seen on only one occasion, and then flying over. This was on May 21, 1914.

22. *Archilochus colubris*. Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

This species occasionally came to the flowers in the yards during August and September. Our latest record is September 21, 1916. It was only once noted at any other time of the year—this on May 10, 1917.

23. *Chaetura pelagica*. Chimney Swift.

Of frequent occurrence, of course on the wing, from May 9 (1915) to September 22 (1917).

24. *Horizopus virens*. Wood Pewee.

For this species we have only two records: May 24, 1914, and September 3, 1914.

25. *Myiarchus crinitus crinitus*. Crested Flycatcher.

Observed, May 13, 1912; May 30, 1916; September 19, 1917; and on one other occasion.

26. *Tyrannus tyrannus tyrannus*. Kingbird.

Three records: April 27, 1915; May 21, 1915; and August 18, 1914.

27. *Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris*. European Starling.

The dead top of the tall silver poplar tree in our back yard seemed to form the special attraction for this species. One was seen perched on the summit, December 24, 1916; two others on January 6, 1918; and a flock of six on January 28, 1917. We have no other records.

28. *Toxostoma rufum rufum*. Brown Thrasher.

Not of regular occurrence, but it occasionally wandered into the yards during September and October, though we did not see it at any other time; in fact, the only records are two individuals on September 26, 1916; and one each on September 23, 1914, and October 1 and 3, 1916.

29. *Mimus polyglottos polyglottos*. Mockingbird.

Occasionally visited the area back of our house, but we have no definite dates.

30. *Lucar carolinensis*. Catbird.

Seen only during April and May, and very irregular during even these months. It was earliest noted on April 24, 1917, and latest, May 31, 1914.

31. *Sialia sialis sialis*. Bluebird.

Of occasional occurrence from September to May, but most frequently seen during the months of September, October, and March. Our only other records are for May 13, 1912, and February 27, 1917.

32. *Planesticus migratorius achrusterus*. Southern Robin.

Common from March to October, and perhaps once in a while nested within the area. Observed on February 14, 1915, and as late as October 27, 1917, but never in November, December, or January. Some of the autumn records probably refer to the Northern Robin, *Planesticus migratorius migratorius*.

33. *Hylocichla fuscescens fuscescens*. Wilson Thrush.

One seen in the tall tree in our yard, May 13, 1912, but on no other occasion.

34. *Hylocichla guttata pallasii*. Hermit Thrush.

Our only record is one individual seen on September 21, 1917. This, however, is an unusually early date for the species in the vicinity of Washington, as its average arrival here is October 17, and the very earliest previously recorded date is September 18, 1900.

35. *Hylocichla aliciae aliciae*. Gray-cheeked Thrush.

This species was seen on September 18, 1917; September 21, 1917; and October 4, 1917. Five individuals, also, were noted in our large silver poplar tree on September 26, 1916. The records for September 18 and 21 are unusually early for the vicinity of Washington, as the average autumn arrival of this species is September 25, and its earliest date, September 15, 1897.

36. *Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni*. Olive-backed Thrush.

This species is of much more frequent occurrence than the Gray-cheeked Thrush. It has been noted from May 13 (1912) to May 25 (1916); and from September 15 (1915) to October 4 (1917). It was heard on May 21, 1915, singing almost as well as in summer.

37. *Hylocichla mustelina*. Wood Thrush.

Rather strangely of not at all frequent occurrence. There are only three positive records—May 17 and 20, 1917, and one other for which we have no definite date.

38. *Polioptila caerulea caerulea*. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.
Once observed, but date not recorded.

39. *Regulus calendula calendula*. Ruby-crowned Kinglet.
Seen, October 11, 1917, and November 4, 1916.

40. *Orchilus regulus satrapa*. Golden-crowned Kinglet.

Of much more frequent occurrence than the Ruby-crowned Kinglet, but still not very common. Noted on only the following dates: October 5 and 15, 1913; October 7 and 8, 1916; October 31, 1915; and November 7, 1915. For the vicinity of Washington, the average arrival at this season is October 6.

41. *Nannus troglodytes hiemalis*. Winter Wren.

One was reported in autumn by Miss May T. Cooke, but date not recorded.

42. *Troglodytes aedon aedon*. House Wren.

Strange to say, of very infrequent occurrence, and observed only in May. Our records are May 2, 1915, May 4, 1914, and May 21, 1917.

43. *Thryothorus ludovicianus ludovicianus*. Carolina Wren.
Also of very infrequent occurrence. The only dates are May 8, 1914; August 22, 1915; and October 26, 1916.

44. *Certhia familiaris americana*. Brown Creeper.

Observed on but one occasion, of which the date was not noted.

45. *Sitta canadensis*. Red-breasted Nuthatch.

Observed occasionally in September and October, but in no other month of the year. Our records are: September 18, 1914; September 26 and 27, 1916; October 3, 6, 7, 8, and 15, 1916; and October 5, 1913.

46. *Sitta carolinensis cookei*. White-breasted Nuthatch.

This bird seems to be much less frequent than the Red-breasted Nuthatch, for we have only two definite records—October 5 and 23, 1913, and one other without date.

47. *Pensthes carolinensis carolinensis*. Carolina Chickadee.
Once noted, but date unknown.

48. *Baeolophus bicolor*. Tufted Titmouse.

Two records—May 18, 1914, and May 26, 1916. This seems to be, in a way, rather remarkable, because one would expect the species in such a place during the winter rather than during the breeding season.

49. *Cyanocitta cristata cristata*. Blue Jay.

Tolerably common from September to early May, but most frequently observed in September. We have not noted it in the fall earlier than September 5 (1915), nor in spring later than May 2 (1915).

50. *Corvus ossifragus*. Fish Crow.

Another very common species, of regular occurrence from August to May, but not noted in June or July.

51. *Corvus brachyrhynchos paulus*. Southern Crow.

One of the most frequent birds from October to May, but not noticed in summer. Doubtless some of the individuals seen during the winter months belong to the common American Crow, *Corvus brachyrhynchos brachyrhynchos*, but as no specimens were taken it is, of course, impossible to verify this probability.

52. *Lanivireo flavifrons*. Yellow-throated Vireo.

A tolerably common summer resident, noted from May 1 (1914) to September 2 (1917). It was heard singing on August 23, 1914.

53. *Vireosylva gilva gilva*. Warbling Vireo.

For this uncommon species in the city of Washington we have but a single record—May 19, 1914.

54. *Vireosylva olivacea*. Red-eyed Vireo.

For so common a bird we have surprisingly few dates. They are: May 11 and 21, 1916; May 23, 1915; May 28, 1914; and September 24, 1914. It was also heard singing on August 23, 1914.

55. *Bombycilla cedrorum*. Cedar Waxwing.

Noticed occasionally from March 18 (1916) to June 2 (1916), and from August 19 (1917) to September 26 (1917). Rather strangely not seen at any other time of the year.

56. *Iridoprocne bicolor*. Tree Swallow.

A flock of 10 was seen flying over high in the air on August 23, 1916, but no others have been observed.

* 57. *Hirundo rustica erythrogastris*. Barn Swallow.

Seen once—on May 10, 1917.

58. *Stelgidopteryx serripennis serripennis*. Rough-winged Swallow.

For this swallow, also, we have but a single date—May 10, 1917.

59. *Progne subis subis*. Purple Martin.

Occasionally seen from May to September. Our earliest date is May 13, 1915, and the latest, September 3, 1917. It is of most frequent occurrence during the period of roosting; that is, during August and early September.

60. *Setophaga ruticilla*. American Redstart.

Rather frequent from May 3 (1914) to September 26 (1916), and apparently the commonest warbler. September 26, it is of interest to state, is an unusually late date for this species in the vicinity of Washington, since the average date of autumn departure is September 19, and the latest date is September 30, 1906.

61. *Wilsonia canadensis*. Canadian Warbler.

Observed on May 20 and 21, 1916, and May 27, 1917, but on no other occasions.

62. *Wilsonia citrina*. Hooded Warbler.

For this beautiful species we have but a single record—May 24, 1914.

63. *Geothlypis trichas trichas*. Maryland Yellowthroat.

One seen on April 24, 1917; and another, in spring, date unknown, was reported by Miss May T. Cooke.

64. *Seiurus aurocapillus aurocapillus*. Ovenbird.

We have no exact date for this species, but once in spring Miss May T. Cooke observed an individual that remained for two days about her yard.

65. *Seiurus motacilla*. Louisiana Water-Thrush.

We noted a single individual on September 20, 1914, a date considerably later than the latest previously known for the species anywhere in the vicinity of Washington, which is September 12, 1895.

66. *Dendroica striata*. Black-poll Warbler.

Sometimes common in May, and noted occasionally in September and October. The earliest spring date is May 14, 1916; the latest, May 31, 1917. Our autumn records are, rather remarkably, only September 21, 1917; October 4, 1914; and October 8, 1916.

67. *Dendroica castanea*. Bay-breasted Warbler.

There is but a single record for this species, and that on May 30, 1917, which, with a single exception, June 5, 1917, is the latest for the vicinity of Washington.

68. *Dendroica pensylvanica*. Chestnut-sided Warbler.

Of this warbler we saw but one, on an unknown date.

69. *Dendroica fusca*. Blackburnian Warbler.

Our single record is October 6, 1916, which is uncommonly late for the species in the region about Washington, since its latest date is October 7, 1889.

70. *Dendroica virens*. Black-throated Green Warbler.

For this pretty little warbler we have only a few records, which are as follows: April 30, 1914; September 17, 21, and 26, 1916.

71. *Dendroica coronata coronata*. Myrtle Warbler.

For so common a species we have surprisingly few notes, as follows: May 1 and 2, 1915; May 25, 1917; and October 4, 1914. That for May 25 is later than any published date for the species about Washington, the previous latest being May 23, 1903, although there is an unpublished record for May 30, 1917.

72. *Dendroica caerulescens caerulescens*. Black-throated Blue Warbler.

Three instances: May 25 and 27, 1915, and another without specific date.

73. *Dendroica tigrina*. Cape May Warbler.

This is one of the warblers that has recently much increased in numbers in the vicinity of Washington. It was not noted in our yard until September 21, 1916, and was more or less common until October 9 of that year; as many as five sometimes being seen within a few minutes. We have only two subsequent records, May 24, 1917, and October 8, 1917. It frequented both the trees along the street and those in the back yards.

74. *Dendroica magnolia*. Magnolia Warbler.

Identified on only three occasions: September 21, 1916; September 21, 1917; and October 8, 1916.

75. *Dendroica aestiva aestiva*. Yellow Warbler.

For so common a bird it was rather remarkably seldom seen; but it apparently does not come into the city so numerous as some other warblers. Our only records are: May 16 and 21, 1915; May 24, 1914; and June 11, 1916.

76. *Compsothlypis americana americana*. Parula Warbler.

We have but a single note on this species—a bird seen in the trees just in front of the house on October 3, 1916.

77. *Compsothlypis americana pusilla*. Northern Parula Warbler.

We have likewise but one record for this bird—a single fully plumaged, typical adult male seen on October 11, 1914.

78. *Vermivora ruficapilla ruficapilla*. Nashville Warbler.

One seen in our back yard on May 6, 1915.

79. *Vermivora peregrina*. Tennessee Warbler.

In 1916 the Tennessee Warbler was unusually numerous in spring about Washington, and on May 21 of this year we saw one in the large silver poplar tree in our back yard. We noted the species also on October 6, 1916, which is rather late, since the average time of its departure from this region is October 4.

80. *Mniotilta varia*. Black and White Warbler.

Only twice observed—on September 26, 1916, and on another occasion for which we have no definite date. The former record was unusually late for this species, since its average fall departure about Washington is September 15.

81. *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*. Bobolink.

Of common occurrence during both spring and fall, but most frequently heard migrating at night. We have records from May 13 (1912) to May 23 (1915); and from August 22 (1916) to September 21 (1917).

82. *Agelaius phoeniceus predatorius*. Red-winged Blackbird

A flock of nine seen flying over on October 11, 1917. Noted also, on one or two other occasions for which no date is available.

83. *Icterus galbula*. Baltimore Oriole

One seen on May 18, 1915, but on no other day.

84. *Icterus spurius*. Orchard Oriole.

Seen once, but no record was made of the date.

85. *Quiscalus quiscula quiscula*. Purple Grackle.

This is, with the exception of the English Sparrow, the most numerous and frequent visitor to our city yards. Apparently, however, it does not breed in this area. It was noted from February 25 (1918) to November 5 (1916).

86. *Piranga erythromelas*. Scarlet Tanager.

Noted on May 17, 1915, and on one other occasion.

87. *Cardinalis cardinalis cardinalis*. Cardinal.

With the exception of the English Sparrow and the Purple Grackle, our most regular and frequent visitor, and seen in every month of the year except July. It seems to be most numerous during February, March, April, May, September, and October. It is one of the most persistent singers of the city yards.

88. *Hedymeles ludovicianus*. Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

We have only two records—one for September 13, 1913, and another for which no date was noted.

89. *Linaria cyanea*. Indigo Bunting.

One seen on May 14, 1916, and another on May 18, 1917.

90. *Pipilo erythrophthalmus erythrophthalmus*. Chewink; Towhee.

Two records: May 13, 1912, and another without date.

91. *Melospiza melodia melodia*. Song Sparrow.

This bird was remarkably infrequent for a species so common in this vicinity. We have but three definite instances—March 31, 1917; May 30, 1916; and October 21, 1917.

92. *Zonotrichia albicollis*. White-throated Sparrow.

Our few dates are as follows: April 21, 1916; October 11 and 19, 1916; and November 15, 1916.

93. *Spizella pusilla pusilla*. Field Sparrow.

One heard singing on April 28, 1917.

94. *Spizella passerina passerina*. Chipping Sparrow.

Noted on April 15, 1915, and on another occasion.

95. *Spizella monticola monticola*. Tree Sparrow.

For this species we have three definite records: March 20 and 24, 1914, and April 13, 1914. The last is a remarkably late date for the District of Columbia; in fact, with the single exception of two other records, April 14, 1917, and May 11, 1917, it is the very latest.

96. *Junco hyemalis hyemalis*. Slate-colored Junco.

Occasionally seen during the winter months. We have records from October 7 (1916) to March 30 (1916).

97. *Passer domesticus hostilis*. English Sparrow.

This bird is, of course, the commonest and most permanent inhabitant of our yards, and breeds both in the trees and about

the cornices of the buildings. It has been noted during every month of the year.

98. *Carpodacus purpureus purpureus*. Purple Finch.

This bird is more or less common during the autumn, winter, and spring, though of rather irregular occurrence. We have records from September 9 (1917) to May 20 (1917). Rather often heard singing in spring.

99. *Astragalinus tristis tristis*. American Goldfinch.

Occasionally observed, but only in April, May, September, and October.

100. *Loxia curvirostra minor*. American Crossbill.

One noted on January 14, 1917.

Insect Migration in Floyd and Adjoining Counties of Iowa.

BY CARROLL LANE FENTON.

On September 17, 1915, I noted a flock of Monarch butterflies (*Anosia plexippus*) resting in an oak grove west of Charles City, Iowa. The flock contained many thousands of individuals, and practically covered the trees for a considerable area. From time to time small numbers of the insects arrived from the north, and occasionally fifty to one hundred would rise into the air and fly to the southeast. In general, though, there was no movement of the flock between the hours of one and five-thirty P. M. In order to form an estimate of the density with which the insects were crowded together I swept my net along a twig, and thirty-seven Monarchs made up the capture.

Two days afterward I again visited the same locality, and found considerable numbers of Monarchs flying about over a near-by creek or resting on some willows or the lower branches of the oaks. Above the trees were large numbers of these butterflies, steadily flying to the southeast. With the Monarchs were a number of Clover Sulphurs (*Colias philodice*), these latter being particularly in evidence about the water. While I failed to make detailed observations each day, this migration apparently lasted until about the twenty-third of September. At no other time did I observe such large numbers of butterflies as I had noted on the